

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-10

ACDA-10 NIC-01 /088 W

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R 111545Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL MUNICH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5636

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

RUFHAMGXAMCONSUL HAMBURG 520

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

UNCLAS MUNICH 0454

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: STRAUSS REPLY TO SPIEGEL

SUMMARY: AT CSU PRESS CONFERENCE IN MUNICH MARCH 10
FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS RESPONDED WITH ONLY PARTIAL DENIAL TO
SPIEGEL ARTICLE WHICH CITED ALLEGED SPEECH OF STRAUSS'S
TO CLOSED SESSION OF CSU BUNDESTAG GROUP CALLING UPON UNION
TO SIT AND LET THINGS GET WORSE ECONOMICALLY SO AS TO WORSEN
SPD POSITION. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT SELECTION PROCESS FOR
UNION CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE SHOULD BEGIN IN EARLY MAY. END
SUMMARY.

1. CSU HAD SCHEDULED PRES CONFERENCE BEFORE SPIEGEL ARTICLE
APPEARED, AND IT WAS TO HAVE BEEN DEVOTED MAINLY TO SECURITY
SITUATION IN FRG. PRESS, CONSEQUENTLY, DUTIFULLY
LISTENED TO BAVARIAN MINISTERS OF INTERIOR AND JUSTICE
DISCUSS FREE STATE'S CONCERN OVER INTERNAL SECURITY PROB-
LEMS BEFORE BEING ABLE TO QUESTION STRAUSS.

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2. STRAUSS MAINTAINED HE HAD SPOKEN NUMBER OF TIMES AT NOVEMBER CLOSED CSU SESSION REPORTED IN SPIEGEL AND THAT MAGAZINE HAD ARTIFICIALLY JUMBLED MATERIAL IT HAD ACQUIRED INTO ONE SPEECH. RESULT, AID STRAUSS, WAS DISTORTION, TAKING OF MATERIAL OUT OF CONTEXT, AND IGNORING FACT THAT MUCH OF WHAT HE HAD SAID WAS INTENDED IRONICALLY. HE CLAIMED ARTICLE CONTAINED SOME QUOTES THAT WERE CORRECT, SOME THAT WERE NOT, BUT HE REFUSED TO SPECIFY WHICH WERE WHICH. HE MAINTAINED, IN FACT, THAT HE COULD NEITHER CONFIRM NOR DENY ANY OF QUOTES, SINCE HE HAD NO RECORD HIMSELF OF WHAT HE HAD SAID. HE INSISTED THAT HE HAD SAID NOTHING NEW, AND HE ARTUED THAT PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION SHOULD WATCH, CRITICIZE AND CONTROL ACTIVITIES OF GOVERNMENT, BUT SHOULD NOT TRY TO SUBSTITUTE ITSELF FOR IT, AND THEREFORE SHOULD NOT TRY TO DRAW UP ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM ON ALL ISSUES. HE ADDED HE HAD NO INTENTION OF SUEING SPIEGEL. STRAUSS, IN SHORT, MADE POINT OF NOTYMEMNYING SPIEGEL ARTICLE FLATLY, BUT ATTEMPTING TO COUNTER IMPRESSION CSU WAS SEEKING WORSENING OF ECONOMIC SITUATION FOR ITS OWN POLITICAL PURPO S.

3. PRESS ALSO USED OPPORTUNITY TO QUESTION STRAUSS ON TIMING OF SELECTION OF UNION CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE. STRAUSS REPLIED HE AND KOHL HD AGREED SELECTION PROCES SHOULD START IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING NORTH RHINE WESTPHALIAN ELECTION MAY 4, AND HE, STRAUSS, BELIEVED CHOCE SHOULD BE MADE WITH ALL DUE SPEED. AT SAME TIME, HE SAID, UNION SHOULD NOT CONSIDER JUST CANDIDATE, BUT ALSO IMPORTANT SUBSTANTIVE POINTS OF PROGRAM AND PERSONNEL QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH THESE. PROCESS, HE SAID, COULD BE COMPLETED BY JUNE 22, DATE OF CDU CONVENTION. HE ADDED THAT UNION SHOULD NOT SEEK "SOME JAMES-SUPER-BOND" AS CANDIDATE.

4. ON SECURITY ISSUE, QUESTION FOR WHICH CONFERENCE HAD BEEN CALLED, STRAUSS DENIED HAVING ANYTHING TO DO WITH JAEGER'S PROPOSAL TO REINTRODUCE DEATH PENALTY. WITHOUT SPECIFYING WHETHER OR NOT HE FAVORED DEATH PENALTY, HE SAID THIS IS NOT THE ISSUE TODAY. ISSUE I INTERNAL SECURITY, E.E., FINDING AND ARRESTING OF TERRORISTS, AND ALL ATTENTION SHOULD BE DEVOTED TO THIS BEFORE TURNING TO QUESTION OF DEATH PENALTY.SPIVACK
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Disposition Reason:
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